



Department  
for Transport

# Community Rail Consultation

**Moving Britain Ahead**



**November 2017**

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# Foreword

The railway plays a vital role in enabling people to live their lives, and in supporting local and regional economies. But they also impact on the success of communities as a whole. The great expansion of railways in the Victorian era saw thousands of miles of track laid heralding an era of unprecedented opportunities for previously isolated communities.



We are in a rail renaissance – passenger numbers are growing and new lines and stations are being opened for the first time in a generation. Across the network, some of the greatest successes have been on rural and branch lines, previously viewed as peripheral to the mainline network. This success, often quietly understated, has been underpinned by the hard work and dedication of locally-led, community-focused organisations, including community rail partnerships, station adopters, and rail user groups.

These partnerships and groups have helped transform these lines and the lives of locals and visitors. By working with the community, local bodies, schools, volunteers and the rail industry they have developed innovative ways to improve stations, raise the profile of the railway, and get more people using the services.

The Government recognises the value of community rail and supports partnerships through grant funding and train operators' provide funding as part of their franchises. Since 2001, the Association of Community Rail Partnerships ("ACoRP") has provided a key role in supporting individual partnerships and groups to shape and fulfil their ambition.

Today, there are nearly 60 community rail partnerships covering all corners of the country – from the Maritime line in the south west to the Bishop line in the north east. Thousands of volunteers across hundreds of communities are giving their time and energy to help support the railway and their communities.

It has been a decade since the Government last reviewed its community rail strategy. Times have changed. Many more people are using our railways and new rail franchises now require more exacting standards for passengers. As we work together to build a stronger, fairer Britain with an excellent transport sector at its heart, we expect community rail to continue to play a key role.

This consultation is based around four themes that are integral to how community rail benefits people, improves communities, and supports the railway. These include connecting people and places; integrating communities to create a fairer society and encourage diversity and inclusion; supporting local and regional economies and sharing opportunities; and suggesting innovative ways to improve the way the railway works, including productive use of underused or unused railway land and stations, and working more closely with heritage railways.

I am committed to see community rail develop and understand what its future role in the rail industry should be and I want to hear all views whether you are currently involved or not in our local railways. This consultation provides you with an opportunity to help shape the future of our community railways so that they continue to develop and thrive for the next decade and beyond.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul Maynard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Paul Maynard MP  
Rail Minister

# Executive summary

- 1 The Government believes community rail is well placed in ensuring the railway reflects the communities and customers it serves. Community rail policy was last reviewed in 2007 and in the decade since there has been considerable change, with community rail continuing to develop amid an evolving and growing rail network.
- 2 The purpose of this consultation is to provide those with an interest in community rail in England and Wales an opportunity to inform future policy.
- 3 Community rail lines are local railways supported by a local partnership organisation who work with and engage local people, public authorities, volunteers and the rail industry in the development and promotion of rail services and stations.
- 4 Although community rail lines and services operate in predominantly rural areas, some also operate in semi-rural, suburban and inner city areas. All community rail lines are part of the national network.
- 5 Community rail has been a proven success story over the past 20 years, with many community inspired projects bringing communities and their local railways closer together.
- 6 This consultation seeks to build on existing community rail initiatives in the context of the Government's objectives for the rail industry. These include providing a world class services for passengers, delivering value for taxpayers, and supporting economic opportunities for all.
- 7 We have engaged widely across the community rail sector to identify four key themes:
  - Connecting people to places and opportunities;
  - Integrating communities to create a fairer society and encourage diversity and inclusion;
  - Supporting local and regional economies and sharing opportunities; and
  - Suggesting innovative ways to improve the way the railway works, including productive use of underused or unused railway land and stations, and working more closely with heritage railways.
- 8 We think these themes are a good fit with the aspirations of the community rail sector and will help guide our thinking.
- 9 We want to hear from existing community rail stakeholders, local authorities, business groups, social enterprises, Local Enterprise Partnerships, and other community groups. This consultation applies across the whole of England and Wales including communities not currently served by community rail services such as urban and commuter lines, but where community rail might develop in the future. We would also welcome responses from members of the public, especially those who use local rail services.

- 10 Responses concerning Wales will be discussed with the Welsh Government in order to determine the future approach in Wales.

# How to respond

The consultation period began on 6 November 2017 and will run until 28 January 2018. Please ensure that your response reaches us before the closing date. If you would like further copies of this consultation document, it can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/dft#consultations> or you can contact Kulvinder Bassi if you need alternative formats (Braille, audio CD, etc.).

Please send consultation responses to:

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33 Horseferry Road,

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020 7944 6066

[CRConsultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:CRConsultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk)

When responding, please state whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. If responding on behalf of a larger organisation, please make it clear who the organisation represents and, where applicable, how the views of members were assembled.

A list of those to whom this consultation document has been sent is attached at Annex C.

## Freedom of Information

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("FOIA") or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

If you want information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence.

In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information, we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

Responses concerning community rail in Wales will be shared with the Welsh Government in order for the future approach in Wales and along the border with Wales to be determined. If your response concerns Wales and/or cross-border issues and you do not wish for it to be shared with the Welsh Government, please state this when responding.

# 1. Context

## Introduction to community rail

- 1.1 Community rail is all about connecting communities and their railways through community-based partnerships, groups, organisations, social enterprises and volunteers.
- 1.2 In England and Wales, a community rail line is a railway supported by a local partnership organisation with an aim to engage local people in the development and promotion of the routes, services and stations.
- 1.3 The community rail concept initially developed from grassroots organisations, before being adopted as a Government strategy and supported more broadly by the rail industry. Community rail lines and services are all part of the commercial rail network. Train companies operate the services and Network Rail own and maintain the infrastructure, the track, signals and the majority of stations.
- 1.4 Community rail lines carry over 40 million customers annually. Although community rail lines and services currently operate in predominantly rural areas, some also operate in semi-rural, suburban and inner city areas.
- 1.5 Community rail lines and services are supported by a Community Rail Partnership (“CRP”). A CRP is a partnership between the train operating company (“TOC”) or companies serving the line, Network Rail, local councils and other community organisations, such as rail user groups, and voluntary groups. There are around 60 CRPs in Great Britain.
- 1.6 In 2004, the Government published the Community Rail Development Strategy, formally recognising community rail and the role of CRPs in supporting the strategic aims of the national railway.

## The case for consultation

- 1.7 The Government last reviewed community rail policy in 2007. In the decade since there has been considerable change, with community rail continuing to develop amid an evolving and growing rail network. The purpose of this consultation is to provide those with an interest in community rail in England and Wales an opportunity to inform future policy.
- 1.8 As part of a successful transport network, the Government believes community rail is well placed to recognise the significant structural, operational, and passenger changes that have occurred over the last decade and to be an important partner in ensuring the railway reflects the communities and customers it serves. In order to achieve this, the Government is seeking views and responses via this public consultation.

## The 2007 Community Rail Development Strategy

- 1.9 The existing Community Rail Development Strategy (“CRDS”) dates from 2007 and set out the following aims:
- Increasing ridership, freight use and net revenue;
  - Managing costs down;
  - Greater involvement of the local community; and
  - Enabling local rail to play a larger role in economic and social regeneration.
- 1.10 ACoRP, is an independent organisation that brought together CRPs and groups in the early 2000s and now supports the further development of the sector. ACoRP receives funding from the UK and Welsh Governments to support delivery of the CRDS, and to support this consultation, ACoRP has produced an accompanying booklet that provides an assessment of how community rail has delivered the 2007 strategy.<sup>1</sup>

## The Government's rail franchising programme

- 1.11 Through its rail franchising programme, the Government seeks to provide improved outcomes for passengers, better value for the taxpayer, and to drive economic benefit for the country. The process has continuously evolved and now includes more bidder, stakeholder and passenger engagement and input than ever before. Recent franchises have seen specific commitments and obligations to support the community rail sector. These have included:
- Provision of funding to CRPs with most new franchises providing funding for CRPs through multi-year settlements. This often enables community rail officers to be employed and aids long term planning;
  - Station adoption schemes leading to increased community involvement. Examples range from solo station adopters reporting faults through to larger groups helping transform station environments and connecting the railway with its community through outreach initiatives;
  - Supporting skills development and training among CRPs through providing access to expert support from ACoRP and industry, for example to do with planning, community engagement, timetabling, fares and marketing;
  - Greater leadership, managerial focus and accountability within train operators; and
  - Encouraging the development of redundant station space for community benefit.
- 1.12 The Welsh Government is working to deliver comparable arrangements for the next Wales and Borders franchise.
- 1.13 New franchisees are also required to set out how they will work with ACoRP to deliver strategic outcomes. ACoRP is dedicated to supporting community-based groups and partnerships that connect their community with their railway and deliver social benefit. As a representative body, ACoRP provides support, advice and information to the community rail sector, particularly through membership services and events. The organisation is an advocate for community rail,

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<sup>1</sup> [https://acorp.uk.com/research-projects/whats-been-achieved-through-community-rail/?\\_sm\\_au=iVVD36nQMwKR2SM](https://acorp.uk.com/research-projects/whats-been-achieved-through-community-rail/?_sm_au=iVVD36nQMwKR2SM)

providing a link between members and national and devolved Governments, partners and industry.

- 1.14 The UK and Welsh Governments provide funding to support ACoRP in its work, and additional funding awarded in 2016 has allowed the organisation to recently double in size, enabling it to further develop its capacity and expert capability.

## Designation

- 1.15 To support the delivery of the CRDS a new approach to managing local and rural rail in England was introduced in 2008 that allowed for the formal designation of some lines and services as community railways. It provided a different approach to the way these lines were managed, marketed and supported. To date, the Department has designated 41 lines as 'Community Railways'. A full list of designations is available online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/community-rail-lines>

- 1.16 Designation identifies community rail lines as distinct from the rest of the national network and allows some national requirements, including the blanket application of Technical Standards for Interoperability, to be relaxed. It was also designed to encourage more radical thinking on implementing local ticketing, operating protocols and other nationally imposed requirements that increased costs without adding value locally.
- 1.17 In 2008, the Department also established the Designated Community Rail Development Fund ("DCRDF"). This annual grant fund, provided by the Government and administered by ACoRP, is a fund that CRPs with designated lines are able to bid for. The DCRDF is currently primarily aimed at supporting marketing campaigns, small scale station improvements and community engagement (e.g. artwork, safety schemes for children, etc.). Between 2008 and 2015 it has supported 167 community rail schemes generating over £1m in third party funding to deliver projects worth over £1.5m.

## Wider support

- 1.18 Community rail has also benefitted from specific funding competitions run by the Department. For example in 2016 the Department held a million pound Heritage and Community Rail Tourism Innovation Competition to encourage a host of innovative projects to boost rail-related tourism. As one of the successful bidders, ACoRP has developed a new national website - Scenic Rail Britain<sup>2</sup> which is introducing British and overseas visitors to the best of Britain's community rail lines.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.scenicrailbritain.com/>

## 2. Government objectives

The Government's objectives for the rail industry are to provide:

- World class services for passengers;
  - Value for taxpayers; and
  - Economic opportunities for all.
- 2.1 In a community rail context, this means understanding the railway as a public service that responds to the needs of the communities it serves. Enabling the community to have a stake in the future of its railway will help make sure the railway is relevant to the people who use it and reflects their needs and aspirations. This will support our wider priorities of focussing on benefiting customers and supporting the economy.
- 2.2 Working with rail industry and with ACoRP and CRPs the Government sets the community rail policy framework to make sure that community rail is aligned with and supports the delivery of the Government's objectives for rail. Consultations are a valuable tool for seeking input from the public, for whom the railway exists to serve.

## 3. Consultation themes

- 3.1 In developing this consultation document, we took views from the National Community Rail Steering Group, and community rail groups. We have also sought input from over 100 CRP officers and trustees, community rail enterprises, rail user groups and volunteers, via the National Community Rail Seminar in early 2017.
- 3.2 The National Community Rail Steering Group aims to provide strategic leadership to the community rail sector and membership comprising UK Government, devolved administrations (Welsh Government; Transport for Scotland; and Rail North), ACoRP, the Rail Delivery Group, Network Rail and TOC representation.
- 3.3 This has resulted in identifying four themes covering 12 questions. These themes set the context within which the Government expects community rail to develop. We think these themes are a good fit with the aspirations of the community rail sector and the responses to this consultation will help inform future strategy. The four themes are:

Connecting people to places and opportunities

Supporting communities, diversity and inclusion

Supporting local and regional economies

Suggesting innovative ways to improve the way the railway works

- 3.4 To guide responses, we have assumed that the existing rail framework will remain broadly as it is and that we are not expecting to make any changes that require legislation.

3.5 The following sections introduce each of the consultation themes, provide a summary of why it is relevant, and pose a number of questions where your views are sought.

## a. Theme: Connecting people to places and opportunities

- 3.6 This theme focuses on how community rail can improve journeys. A good quality transport network is a fundamental part of enabling people to live their lives.
- 3.7 While there has been sustained passenger growth across the rail industry over the last two decades, many community rail lines have seen not just equivalent growth, but in some cases significant additional growth too. For example the Severn Beach Line in Bristol has seen 350% growth over the last decade. This growth brings challenges in terms of the ability for the network to provide rolling stock and timetable capacity to meet demand, and also for station facilities to keep pace with changes, for example by providing additional ticket vending opportunities.
- 3.8 There is scope for community rail to engage with Sub-national Transport Bodies ("STBs") which span regions. STBs can request bespoke functions and responsibilities which meet the needs of local areas allowing local people a greater say in strategic transport planning.
- 3.9 This theme seeks responses for how community rail can better integrate people's end-to-end journey. We want to promote rail as a key part of sustainable, healthy travel, and make it easier for people to choose rail over less environmentally sustainable modes of transport. Finally, we want to hear from you how community rail can help to better meet the needs of passengers and communities in the future.

### **Question 1a: What role can community rail play in improving end-to-end journeys?**

#### **Question 1b: How can community rail help to:**

- Make journeys more sustainable?
  - Encourage more healthy travel?
  - Reduce the environmental impact of travel?
- 3.10 This question is about integrating community rail as part of a customers' end-to-end journey. This could include getting to and from the station, including a range of transport modes such as walking, cycling, local buses, community transport, taxi, as well as car.
- 3.11 We will be particularly interested to hear ideas about how this theme might be delivered, including how key delivery partners would be involved, and the role of community rail in helping to deliver improved journeys.
- 3.12 Where appropriate, respondents are asked to provide examples of best practice where locally-led initiatives are providing benefits for passengers, and the extent to which these could be replicated on a larger scale.

## **Question 2: How can community rail help:**

- a. Communities have a voice in influencing the provision of rail?
  - b. Complementary transport services and development of the rail network?
- 3.13 This question is about developing our railways to better meet the needs of the customers and communities they serve.
- 3.14 We are keen to understand how community rail reflects the communities it serves and how it communicates local priorities to decision makers within the national rail industry.
- 3.15 Respondents are requested to provide suggestions on ways to strengthen the ways community rail experts provide advice. We will be interested in responses that set out how community rail can enhance its reputation and visibility across local stakeholders and partners.

## **Question 3: Where should the Government encourage community rail to develop on parts of the network currently without active CRPs or other community participation?**

- 3.16 Studies, including the 2015 'Value of Community Rail Partnerships'<sup>3</sup> have found that community rail pays for itself through adding economic, social and environmental value, supporting additional growth per annum on community rail routes, and delivering low-cost high-benefit outcomes such as improving perceptions of safety and security.
- 3.17 There are currently around 60 CRPs, each distinct and with their own identity and ambition. Community rail has been particularly successful in encouraging community engagement in the north of England, where a large number of CRPs have been established. The strength of many partnerships stems from their committed grassroots involvement.
- 3.18 To date the Government's role in supporting the creation of CRPs in new areas has focused on requiring franchised train operators to support new partnerships and in providing funding to ACoRP which has a core objective of supporting new partnerships where they emerge. Government does not currently actively promote the introduction of Community Rail to lines and services without a partnership, or to encourage Community Rail to become established in urban communities.
- 3.19 We would be interested in responses that focus on the pros and cons of the Government adopting a policy position that more overtly and actively encourages the development of new CRPs across the national network and how such an expansion could be funded.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://acorp.uk.com/research-projects/research/value-of-community-rail-partnerships/>

## b. Theme: Supporting communities, diversity and inclusion

- 3.20 This theme strongly aligns with one of the Department's key priorities for continuing to increase the accessibility of the rail network, including for customers with disabilities, as well as the Government's aim of achieving more integrated communities.
- 3.21 Successful and strong communities are supported by public services that create the conditions for everyone to live and work alongside each other. This includes those in our communities that are from minority groups, living with impairments or disabilities, or who are disadvantaged or hard-to-reach and isolated.
- 3.22 This theme considers the wider contribution that community rail makes in helping to bring about fairer, more equal communities. We believe there is a key role for community rail to engage and help provide leadership in delivering this theme.
- 3.23 This could include the role of CRPs in working beyond the rail industry – especially with the voluntary sector. There are potential benefits from aligning the social and economic opportunities provided by rail with the ambition and innovation of social enterprises and community organisations, local schools, colleges, business groups and networks, and community leaders. We will be interested to hear from respondents from within and outside the community rail sector and rail industry for how this engagement can be promoted and supported.
- 3.24 The following questions seek responses about the role of community rail in supporting this agenda, which includes promoting active and healthy lifestyles, encouraging journeys for those with mobility requirements and disabilities, and ensuring the railway is accessible for as many people as possible.

### **Question 4a: What is the role of community rail in supporting:**

- Community cohesion?
- Promoting diversity?
- Enabling social inclusion?

### **Question 4b: How is this best achieved?**

- 3.25 This question is about understanding the wider contribution of community rail in supporting community cohesion through bringing disparate groups together, promoting tolerance and understanding, and helping to bring about fairer, more equal communities.
- 3.26 We will be interested in understanding whether there are any particular groups (e.g. young people, elderly, black, Asian or minority ethnic) that are currently excluded from participating in community rail initiatives (e.g. station adoption, community art, music trains and special events) and the barriers they experience.
- 3.27 Where appropriate, respondents are asked to provide examples of best practice where locally-led initiatives are providing benefits for disadvantaged and minority groups or leading to greater community cohesion through bringing disparate groups together, and the extent to which these could be replicated on a larger scale or in other areas. We will be particularly interested to hear ideas about how this theme might be delivered, including key delivery partners, and the role of community rail in helping local communities.

**Question 5: How can community rail help to make sure that the railway is accessible to as many people as possible?**

- 3.28 The railway provides access to employment, health services, education and leisure and should be accessible to as many people as possible. This includes being physically accessible for those with mobility issues and physical disabilities, but also about providing a safe and supportive environment for those with learning and 'hidden' disabilities such as autism, or multiple sclerosis. It also includes supporting access for vulnerable groups and people not currently accessing rail and providing greater inclusivity through outreach initiatives.
- 3.29 We are keen to understand how community rail can support the railway to become more accessible, including for those with physical or learning disabilities, and those from under-represented groups (for example those from black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds).
- 3.30 We are interested in understanding whether there are locally-led initiatives supporting individuals with learning difficulties or mental health issues to live active and healthy lifestyles, and the extent to which these could be replicated on a larger scale or in other areas.
- 3.31 We are interested in understanding how community rail can facilitate locally-led initiatives that make stations and rail travel more accessible for underrepresented groups, and the extent to which these could be replicated on a larger scale.

## c. Theme: Supporting local and regional economies

- 3.32 This theme strongly aligns with all aspects of the Department's key strategic priorities, particularly boosting economic growth and opportunity.
- 3.33 The national railway has an important role to play in building a stronger, more balanced economy as part of a modern industrial strategy that spreads jobs, prosperity and opportunity around the country, and which responds to local growth priorities.
- 3.34 A significant number of community rail routes operate in rural and coastal communities. These communities are becoming more economically diverse with tourism an increasingly important component of local economies, but also in providing fast and reliable connections with other areas.
- 3.35 This consultation theme seeks responses on the role community rail could play supporting employment and training opportunities, maximising the economic potential of local areas, and making better and more socially and economically productive use of underused or unused railway land and stations.

### **Question 6: How can community rail support local economies and railways grow through:**

- Increasing employment?
  - Education and training opportunities?
  - Supporting small businesses?
  - Social enterprise development?
- 3.36 This question deals with the role of community rail in facilitating and supporting economic growth.
- 3.37 We believe there is opportunity for community rail to support the economic development of local areas and their railways, including through developing and supporting initiatives that engage disadvantaged groups, and through social enterprise.
- 3.38 We believe that community rail could also support and promote economic opportunities through initiatives such as engaging Local Enterprise Partnerships ("LEPs"), local authorities, and business groups, as well as the rail industry.
- 3.39 We want to understand the scale and extent to which this is already happening, and we are also interested in understanding the opportunity and willingness of respondents to develop and support future schemes that facilitate social mobility and economic prosperity.

### **Question 7: What role can community rail play in making best use of:**

- Station buildings?
  - Railway land?
- 3.40 There is an extensive estate of land and buildings linked to the railway; some, but not all, owned by Network Rail and its predecessors. There is an ongoing programme to dispose of property assets as they become surplus to operational requirements.
- 3.41 Where land and property remains under public ownership, there is an opportunity to consider maximising value for communities and to help address a number of wider Government objectives.
- 3.42 Through the rail franchising programme, Government is requiring TOCs to develop and deliver a 'Social and Commercial Development Plan' the purpose of which is to require them to identify underused and redundant station assets and to work with passengers and local stakeholders to refurbish these and make them available for the community and small businesses to use.
- 3.43 We are keen to understand the extent to which community rail can work with TOCs, Network Rail and local land and property owners to make the most effective use of station buildings and land (e.g. car parks, vacant land, etc.) in ways that support and enhance communities and local economies.

## d. Theme: Suggesting innovative ways to improve the way the railway works

- 3.44 Over the last decade, community rail has become an embedded part of the national rail network. This theme is concerned with understanding the extent to which community rail can further develop, while retaining its unique and valuable position as a grassroots-led movement driven by local communities.
- 3.45 Community rail is developing a reputation for delivering improvements to stations that are both good value for money, but also bring added benefits from involving the community.
- 3.46 This section will consider current industry structures and how these interact with community rail. There are questions about how community rail can champion industry sustainability and innovation; the role of Government support for community rail via existing grant funding mechanisms; and how designation can be developed in the future.
- 3.47 This section is an opportunity for respondents to look to the future and to set out the ambition and possibilities that community rail could deliver.

### **Question 8: How can community rail be best supported to act:**

- Innovatively?
  - Effectively?
- 3.48 Innovation involves continuous improvement and developing fresh approaches. This could include new and better ways to deliver an improved passenger experience or to manage services in a more effective and efficient manner.
- 3.49 There are already good examples of community rail acting innovatively, such as the 'Harrington Hump' that was pioneered by community rail and has been adopted more widely by the network. Respondents are encouraged to set out innovative approaches that facilitate community rail schemes. Respondents are also asked to explain the barriers to realising innovative schemes.

### **Question 9: What opportunities are there to secure a:**

- Diverse income base for community rail?
  - Sustainable income base for community rail?
- 3.50 Currently, community rail and CRPs are supported via the Government's franchise programme with franchise competitions routinely requiring TOCs to become members of local CRPs and provide ongoing management and financial support. Some local authorities also provide funding and other support.
- 3.51 We wish to see community rail thrive and have a sustainable and long-term future. An important part of this is will be considering the opportunities for community rail to develop additional and new sources of income. This could include linking the railway to the needs of the wider community and supporting the delivery of local services. It could provide for some CRPs to become more entrepreneurial, recognise social enterprise opportunities and provide services where these are not currently provided.

### **Question 10: How can community rail designation be developed to more fully realise its potential?**

- 3.52 As noted earlier in this document, the Government has formally recognised some CRPs through a formal process of ‘designation’ with the intention of allowing some flexibility in the operation of local services, including ticket concessions and derogations from some industry standards. Designation also offers access to the Government funded DCRDF that provides grants for small projects.
- 3.53 To date, there are around 60 CRPs across Great Britain, and 41 Community Rail routes have been designated by the Government.
- 3.54 We are interested to hear your views about the role designation has played in embedding community rail into the rail industry, and its relevance for the future. This includes consideration of the difference between line and service designation, and the link between designation and access to government grant funding. We would be keen to learn from you about how the intention and ambition of designation to differentiate from national standards could be delivered in different ways.

### **Question 11: How can community rail:**

- Support the development of rail line and stations improvement?
  - Contribute to the development of rail line and station improvement?
  - Make greater use of heritage railways?
- 3.55 Supporting a sustainable expansion of the railway network into local communities is an important step in achieving socio-economic growth. Successful proposals for new stations and infrastructure require the support of local authorities, LEAs, developers, and other parties. For example, working with developers and local planning authorities can support housing delivery and improve transportation links to new homes. We believe there is also an important role for CRPs in ensuring that the voice of communities is understood in this process and are interested in the role of community rail in working with stakeholders to identify and develop the case for new rail infrastructure.
- 3.56 There is also a successful network of ‘heritage’ rail operators, who maintain lines and provide rail services. Some of these lines and services are adjacent to the national rail network and some are actually connected. In addition to new lines and stations, we believe there is also an opportunity for greater collaboration with Britain’s heritage rail sector, which could include opportunities to work with independently owned ‘heritage’ railways to provide new journey options.

# What will happen next?

Following engagement with the Welsh Government, a summary of responses, including the next steps, will be published within three months of the consultation closing on 28 January 2018. Paper copies will be available on request.

If you have questions about this consultation please contact:

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Further background information can be found at:

[www.gov.uk/government/collections/community-rail-lines](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/community-rail-lines)

# Annex A: Full list of consultation questions

## **Theme: Connecting people to places and opportunities**

**Question 1a: What role can community rail play in improving end-to-end journeys?**

**Question 1b: How can community rail help to:**

- Make Journeys more sustainable?
- Encourage more healthy travel?
- Reduce the environmental impact of travel?

**Question 2: How can community rail help:**

- Communities have a voice in influencing the provision of rail?
- Complementary transport services and development of the rail network?

**Question 3: Where should the Government encourage community rail to develop on parts of the network currently without active CRPs or other community participation?**

## **Theme: Supporting communities, diversity and inclusion**

**Question 4a: What is the role of community rail in supporting:**

- Community cohesion?
- Promoting diversity?
- Enabling social inclusion?

**Question 4b: How is this best achieved?**

**Question 5: How can community rail help to make sure that the railway is accessible to as many people as possible?**

## **Theme: Supporting local and regional economies**

**Question 6: How can community rail support local economies and railways grow through:**

- Increasing employment?
- Education and training opportunities?
- Supporting small businesses?
- Social enterprise development?

**Question 7: What role can community rail play in making best use of:**

- Station buildings?
- Railway land?

**Theme: Suggesting innovative ways to improve the way the railway works**

**Question 8: How can community rail be best supported to act:**

- Innovatively?
- Effectively?

**Question 9: What opportunities are there to secure a:**

- Diverse income base for community rail?
- Sustainable income base for community rail?

**Question 10: How can community rail designation be developed to more fully realise its potential?**

**Question 11: How can community rail:**

- Support the development of rail line and stations improvement?
- Contribute to the development of rail line and station improvement?
- Make greater use of heritage railways?

**Question 12: Do you have any other comments on how Government can best support the future of community rail?**

## Annex B: Consultation principles

The consultation is being conducted in line with the Government's key consultation principles. Further information is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance>

If you have any comments about the consultation process please contact:

Consultation Co-ordinator  
Department for Transport  
Zone 1/29 Great Minster House  
London SW1P 4DR  
Email [consultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@dft.gsi.gov.uk)

## Annex C: List of consultees

Association of Community Rail Partnerships  
British Chambers of Commerce  
British Cycling  
Bus Users UK  
Business in the Community  
Campaign for Better Transport  
Community Transport Association  
Community Rail Partnerships  
DB Schenker  
Direct Rail Services  
Freightliner Ltd  
GB Railfreight Ltd  
Heritage Railway Association  
LEP Network  
Local Government Association  
Network Rail  
Office of Rail and Road Regulation  
Rail Delivery Group  
Rail Freight Group  
Rail Future  
Railway Heritage Trust  
Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB)  
Sustrans  
Transport Focus  
Visit Britain  
Visit England  
Visit Scotland  
Visit Wales  
Welsh Government